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INFO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1551
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9743
RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 7831
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 8989
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1655
RUEHKU/AMEMBASSY KUWAIT 0239
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA 0676
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0309
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
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SUBJECT: BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT RENEWS RIHS REGISTRATION

REF: DHAKA 0446

Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Geeta Pasi; Reason 1.4(d)

¶1. (SBU) On March 20, NGO Affairs Bureau Assistant Director A.K.M. Humayun Kabir confirmed to us that his agency had renewed the registration of the Revival of Islamic Heritage Society (RIHS) after the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) gave its concurrence (reftel). Kabir said that the GOB never banned RIHS activities for even a temporary period, and described press reports to the contrary as untrue. He added that MOHA cleared the renewal of RIHS's registration after investigating their activities in the wake of press reports linking the Kuwait-based NGO to the banned terrorist group Jamaatul Mujahidin Bangladesh (JMB).

¶2. (C) Comment: Throughout 2006, senior officials of the then ruling government assured us that RIHS was being shut down in Bangladesh as an example of Bangladeshi support for the GWOT and because RIHS had financed religious projects associated with a senior JMB figure. The Sudanese office director was obliged to leave Bangladesh, accounts were temporarily frozen, and the RIHS office in Dhaka assumed a lower profile, although it never completely closed. As soon as other sponsors were found for RIHS charitable projects, we were told, the RIHS presence in Bangladesh would be terminated. The registration renewal of RIHS is disappointing, especially since the new government had identified counterterrorism as a top policy priority. We will convey our disappointment to appropriate GOB officials, request GOB reconsideration of this issue, and report subsequent developments.
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